Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Board of Bar Examiners

IMPORTANT NOTICE FOR LAPTOP TEST TAKERS

Bring your laptop computer on **Thursday, July 28, 2011** for the essay portion of the Massachusetts bar examination. **<u>Do not bring</u>** your laptop on Wednesday, the Multistate Bar Examination day.

You will NOT be able to test with your laptop computer if you have not successfully downloaded and registered the software PRIOR to the date of the examination. You will be required to handwrite the examination. Proctors will issue the appropriate essay answer books and you will remain in your assigned seat and section.

Please contact ExamSoft at **(866) 429-8889** if you have any questions or problems with the downloading of your examination answer files.

Once the initial download process is complete, secure examination answer files will be downloaded to your computer. These files are password protected. You cannot open them until the essay day (Thursday) of the Massachusetts bar examination.

You should complete the Mock Exam once, and take the Practice Exam several times to test your laptop computer. The Mock Exam upload process will familiarize you with the proper procedures. The Practice Exam allows you to familiarize yourself with the SofTest exam environment and word processing features. The Practice Exam *cannot* be saved and *no answer file* will be uploaded. You may use this Practice Exam as many times as you wish.

Your computer will automatically reboot when you exit both the morning and afternoon examination sessions. Following the completion of the examination on Thursday, you will be required to connect to the Internet and upload your examination files. Instructions for uploading your answer files will be provided at the examination site.

NOTE: Your essay answers MUST be uploaded by <u>9:00 PM</u> (EDT) on Thursday, July 28, 2011. Answers not uploaded by the deadline will <u>NOT</u> be graded. Applicants who took the examination but did not upload an answer file will receive grades of zero (0) for those answers.

<u>Essay Examination Day Procedures for Laptop Test Takers</u>

<u>Prior to Arrival at the Examination Site</u>

- You <u>must</u> disable all screensavers and/or hibernation features currently installed on your laptop computer and set all volume controls to mute or to the lowest possible setting.

- **All external media** such as DVDs, CDs, floppy disks, USB memory drives, etc. must be removed prior to arrival at test site.

- You <u>may not</u> take your computer case/bag into the Examination Room. If you bring it to the examination site, you will be required to store it in the unsecured area. All laptop cases/bags left in the unsecured area must have an identifying tag with your name attached.

Early Arrival at Examination Site

You must arrive at your Examination Room by **8:15AM**. Go to your section and pre-assigned seat. Once you have located your assigned seat, you should immediately begin setting up your computer and begin the boot up process. Each seat will be provided with pre-examination instructions to be followed. The pre-examination instructions detail the process for booting up your laptop computer and initializing the SofTest program. The instructions have several steps and will bring you to the "Begin" screen, which is **immediately prior** to the Essay answer screen. **Do not type "**Begin**"** until instructed by the Bar Examiner/Room Supervisor. If you have any problems during the boot up process, you must notify a proctor immediately. The proctor will give you the essay answer books and you will be required to handwrite the entire essay portion of the bar examination. It is your responsibility to ensure your laptop is in working order **PRIOR** to time of the examination.

Morning Exam Session

Morning session consists of five (5) essay questions and lasts for three (3) hours. Because each session is considered one test, you are permitted to access your answers to all five (5) essay questions throughout the session. **Technical assistance will not be provided under any circumstances while the examination is in progress.**

If you leave your seat for any reason during testing, you must block your screen before leaving. You can do so by selecting View, then Hide Exam in the SofTest menu. When you return, you can click anywhere to continue.

Your laptop must remain in the Examination Room throughout the entire length of the examination. If you should finish the examination early, you may leave the area after you have saved your file, closed the exam and exited the program. Your laptop, however, must remain at your seat until you have completed the afternoon session.

Completion of Examination Session (AM or PM) Prior to Time Being Called

If you complete the essay examination before the 15-minute announcement is given, you may follow the post-examination instructions to save your answers. Please follow the post-examination instructions to save and exit the program. Once you have completed the instructions to exit SofTest, signal the proctor by raising your hand and you may leave the Examination Room. Your laptop computer must remain on from boot up at 8:15 AM until the end of testing at approximately 4:30 PM. **It cannot be removed from the Examination Room until you have finished the afternoon session**. During periods of non-testing, your laptop computer must remain at the Windows desktop.

NOTE: Once you **save** your answers, and **close** the exam and **exit** the program, your examination session is completed and you cannot reopen SofTest.

Completion of Examination Session (AM or PM) After Time is Called

Each applicant will be provided with post-examination instructions to be followed. Be mindful that if you are still working when time is called, you must **<u>immediately</u>** lift your

hands from the keys. You will be able to use your mouse **ONLY** to exit the testing software. You must keep your other hand in your lap.

Lunch Period – Note: Your lunch period is short, plan accordingly.
Dismissal: You will be dismissed for lunch (approximately 12:00 PM). All applicants must leave the Examination Room at this time. If you are having difficulty **saving your answer file,** however, please remain in the Examination Room.

Return: You will be permitted to enter the Examination Room at approximately 1:00 PM to begin the boot up process for the afternoon session. You are required to return to the Examination Room no later than instructed by the Bar Examiner to ensure sufficient time for the boot up process. General afternoon instructions will begin at approximately 1:15PM.

Afternoon Session
Boot up instructions for your laptop are similar to those for the morning session. The afternoon session consists of five (5) essay questions and lasts for three (3) hours. Because each session is considered one test, you are permitted to access your answers to all five (5) essay questions throughout the session. **Technical assistance will not be provided while the examination is in progress under any circumstances.**

End-of-Day
Similar to the morning session, if you complete the examination before the 15-minute announcement is given, you can follow the post-examination instructions to save your answers and you may leave the Examination Room.

Post Examination Procedures
It is your responsibility to find an Internet connection (hotel, Internet café, wireless hotspot, etc.) and upload your answer files by the designated time (9:00 PM (EDT) on Thursday).
The upload process should take only a few minutes depending on your Internet connection speed and your computer. A visual "progress status" (blue bar) is displayed as the upload takes place. When the upload is complete, a "success" message is displayed. Two separate email confirmations (AM and PM) will be sent to the email address provided when you filed your bar application.

If you have problems or questions with the software or uploading begin by visiting ExamSoft's Frequently Asked Questions web page located at http://www.examsoft.com.
Technical support from ExamSoft will also be available to you via email at support@examsoft.com or by phone toll-free at **(866) 429-8889**. The Massachusetts customized ExamSoft website is http://www.examsoft.com/mabar.

Your hard drive will contain an encrypted version of your essay answers that will be used in the event of a catastrophic failure. Reformatting your hard drive will delete these files and will render your examination invalid. ***DO NOT reformat your hard drive until after examination results have been released in early May for the February examination and early November for the July examination.*** If any problems occur during the printing of your essay answers, you will be contacted and required to produce your laptop computer for analysis of the encrypted version of SofTest on your hard drive.

- ***Do not remove SofTest from your laptop until after you have received your results***.

Computer-Based Testing Reminders

- Power will be supplied. You are **required to bring a power cord adaptor** for your computer. If you do not bring a power cord adaptor you will be instructed to hand-write the exam.

- An external mouse and/or full-size keyboard are permitted.

- If you leave your seat for any reason during testing, you must block your screen before leaving. You can do so by selecting View, then Hide Exam in the SofTest menu. When you return, you can click anywhere to continue.

- In the event a software, hardware or power failure occurs before or during administration of the examination that cannot be resolved immediately, you will be required to hand write your essay answers. **No additional testing time will be given.**

- If you finish early, you may not use your computer to access the Internet or anything else on your computer. This means **NO** browsing, chatting, emailing, game playing, etc. You may not use your laptop until completion of your afternoon session.

- **If you are still working when time is called, you must _immediately_ lift your hands from the keys. You will be able to use your mouse ONLY to exit SofTest. You must keep your other hand in your lap.**

- **It is _not_ possible to take secure exams through a virtual operating system such as Microsoft's Virtual Machine, Parallels or VMware, VMware Fusion or any other virtual operating system environment. Although SofTest can be installed and registered on virtual platforms, it will only be enabled for non-secure Practice Exams.**

- Do not copy the ExamSoft Program from one computer to another. Do not bring other laptop computers or word processors to the test site to use as backups.

- Any attempt to disable or tamper with SofTest's security features is prohibited. If it is discovered that tampering has been attempted, this information will be reported to the Board of Bar Examiners for whatever action it may deem appropriate, which could include disqualification for admission to the bar in Massachusetts.

- Do not remove SofTest from your laptop until after you have received your results.

- The Board of Bar Examiners is in receipt of your signed *Statement of Compliance* and expects all applicants using a laptop for the essay portion to adhere to the terms and conditions that were set forth in that statement.

- **Your essay answers MUST be uploaded by _9:00 PM_ (EDT) on Thursday, July 28, 2011. Answers not uploaded by the deadline will NOT be graded. Applicants who took the examination but did not upload an answer file will receive grades of zero (0) for those answers.**